

ALABAMA BOARD OF EXAMINERS OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

MINUTES **Board Meeting** **March 18, 2025**

The Alabama Board of Examiners of Landscape Architects met on Tuesday, March 18, 2025, at the Board's office located at 2777 Zelda Road in Montgomery, Alabama to conduct regular business of the Board. The following members were in attendance: Mr. Chad Watkins (Board Chair) and Ms. Julie Stephens (Vice Chair) and Ms. Lea Ann Macknally (member). Others in attendance were Mr. Keith Warren (Executive Director), Mr. Hunter Sims (Board Legal Counsel), Ms. Leah Cochrane (Licensing Specialist), Mr. Brannon Littleton (CFO) and Ms. Renee' Reames (recording secretary). Chairman Watkins called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m. Mr. Warren called Board member roll and he announced that a quorum of the members was present to conduct business.

Public notice of this regularly scheduled meeting was published on the Secretary of State's web site at www.sos.alabama.gov in accordance with the requirements of the Alabama Open Meetings Act and advertised on the Board's web site at www.abela.alabama.gov.

Approval of Agenda

Chairman Watkins presented for Board approval the agenda for the March 18, 2025 meeting. A copy of the agenda was provided to the members prior to the meeting for their review.

MOTION: Ms. Stephens made a motion to approve the March meeting agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Macknally and unanimously approved by the Board.

Approval of Minutes

Chairman Watkins presented for Board approval a copy of the October 29, 2024 minutes from the regular meeting and minutes from the February 26, 2025 special meeting. A copy of the minutes was provided to the members prior to the meeting for their review.

MOTION: Ms. Stephens made a motion to approve the October regular meeting minutes and the January special meeting minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Macknally and unanimously approved by the Board.

REPORTS

Board Chair Report

Chairman Watkins indicated that he had no report at this time.

Executive Director's Report

Mr. Warren presented the Executive Director's Report. He reported on the number of licensees (#300) as of March 11, 2025, and indicated that no complaints had been received in the current fiscal year (FY) 2025 nor during FY 2024. Other activities performed by staff since the last Board meeting held in October were also reviewed (report available in the Board's official Book of Minutes).

Licensure Statistics: Mr. Warren presented a list of new licenses, along with a list of expired licenses as of March 16, 2025. Mr. Warren reported that the renewal period ended March 15, 2025.

Legislative Report: Mr. Warren reported that the Board's proposed Legislative Bill HB594, sponsored by Representative Rafferty, had been read in the House Chamber and referred to the Boards, Agencies and Commissions Committee.

The Board also discussed opposition to SB193 concerning the consolidation of occupational boards.

Website Updates: Mr. Warren reported that updates to the Board's website were continuing and the link to the proposed legislation would also be posted on the website when available.

Board Terms and Vacancies: Ms. Stephens reported that a licensee had indicated interest in serving on the Board to fill her position on the Board. The members agreed that, upon receipt of the candidates resume, the Board would write a letter of recommendation to the Governor concerning the appointment to the Board.

Financial Report

Mr. Littleton presented the financial activities of the Board for the period ending February 28, 2025 (report available in the Board's official Book of Minutes). He reported on revenue and expenditures during the period of October 1, 2024 through February 28, 2025, and reported a positive cash balance. He also reviewed the expenditures by categories compared to budget and presented projected expenditures for the remainder of the year. He reported a year-end projected positive cash. The Board discussed the use of Board funds to benefit the licensees, e.g., sponsoring CE seminars at no charge to the licensees, public awareness concerning required licensure and completed projects. MOTION: Ms. Stephens made a motion to accept the financial report as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Macknally and unanimously approved by the Board.

Legal Counsel's Report

Mr. Sims reported on an inquiry concerning in the use of the term "designer". He indicated that the Board did not have jurisdiction pertaining to the term; however, the use or title of landscape architect or registered landscape architect was a violation of the Board's statute if an individual was not licensed by the Board. Ms. Macknally reported that CLARB may have defined the term "designer" and she indicated that she would respond to the individual making the inquiry.

ASLA Alabama Update

Ms. Macknally indicated that she had no additional report concerning ASLA. The Board had previously discussed proposed SB193 which the Association and the Board were opposed.

CLARB Update

Ms. Macknally reported that the CLARB annual meeting was scheduled on September 18-20, 2025 in Lexington, Kentucky. Chairman Watkins indicated interest in attending and would notify Mr. Warren about his final plans.

OLD BUSINESS

Continuing Education Review Committee

Ms. Macknally reported that the Board's CE Committee had discussed the audit of licensees' CE hours and recommended a platform was needed to host the review process. Mr. Littleton commented on the Microsoft Teams platform. Ms. Macknally indicated that the CE Committee would discuss the matter further to identify tool preferences for an online platform and evaluate platforms.

She also reported that the CE Committee recommended that 1 PEH be given to licensees attending the webinar held on October 29, 2024 concerning the proposed uniform standards legislation and the Board agreed.

Discussion of License Expiration Date

The Board discussed the Board's rules concerning annual expiration of license on December 31 and late fees assessed through January 31 and the ability to renew until March 15. Mr. Warren reported that license renewal period opened on November 1, prior to the license expiring on December 31. Chairman Watkins indicated that revisions to the Board's statute were underway, and he deferred further discussion of the matter to such time that a full review was conducted. Chairman Watkins asked the Board's Legal Counsel to recommend changes and Chairman Watkins proposed a Board meeting in July to discussion licensure expiration date, renewal period, and continuing education credits and audit of CE hours compared to the CLARB Model Uniform Standards.

NEW BUSINESS

Renewal of Administrative Services Contract

Chairman Watkins reported that the administrative services contract with Smith Warren Management Services was scheduled to expire in August. Mr. Warren and staff left the meeting at 2:45 p.m. while the Board discussed the management services contract, and re-joined the meeting at 2:55 p.m.

MOTION: Ms. Macknally made the motion to renewal the administrative services contract with Smith Warren Management Services for one year at the same rate. The motion was seconded by Ms. Stephens and unanimously approved by the Board.

Next Board Meeting Date:

The Board agreed to meet on July 29, 2025 as previously discussed earlier in the meeting. The Board meeting to be held at 10:00 a.m. at the Board's office.

Ms. Stephens indicated a scheduling conflict with the October Board meeting date and Mr. Warren indicated that he would poll the members about identifying a new meeting date in October.

Approval of Applications & License Ratification

Chairman Watkins presented a list of new licensees for the Board's approval and called for a motion to ratify approval of issuing of new licenses:

- Ms. Macknally moved to ratify approval of licensee #983. The motion was seconded by Ms. Stephens. Following a roll call vote, the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

- Ms. Macknally moved to ratify approval of licensee #984. The motion was seconded by Ms. Stephens. Following a roll call vote, the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.
- Ms. Macknally moved to ratify approval of licensee #985. The motion was seconded by Ms. Stephens. Following a roll call vote, the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.
- Ms. Macknally moved to ratify approval of licensee #986. The motion was seconded by Ms. Stephens. Following a roll call vote, the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.
- Ms. Macknally moved to ratify approval of licensee #987. The motion was seconded by Ms. Stephens. Following a roll call vote, the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND OTHER BUSINESS

Chairman Watkins called for other business and there was none.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business of the Board, Ms. Macknally made the motion that the meeting be adjourned. Ms. Stephens seconded the motion and unanimously approved by the Board. Chairman Watkins adjourned the meeting at 2:58 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Chad Watkins
Board Chair

Keith E. Warren
Executive Director

/rr  Minutes Approved on July 29, 2025